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ABSTRACT

At the Foreign Language"Think Tank" Symposium of April 1975, the following major problems of community college foreign language teachers were identified: (1) low enrollment; (2) attrition; (3) low achievers; (4) articulation with universities; and (5) lack of interest. Suggested solutions included: (Problem 1) advertisement, a foreign language requirement, relevance in the classroom; (Problem 2) more oral work, individualization, and courses geared towards nurses, police, and social workers; (Problem 3) individualization and re-examination of goals and objectives; and (Problem 5) stimulating interest through "Language Days," fairs, tutoring, awards, and scholarships. Problem 4 was found to be not really a problem. In addition to this discussion, a materials exchange produced books, cassettes, TV tapes, film, slides, and transparencies. A preview was also given of foreign language radio spot announcements. Finally, the following were discussed: university programs, the Florida Foreign Language Task Force, several trips, and a Language Day Fair at the Florida Technological University campus at Orlando. (AM)

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Foreign Language "Think Tank"
Symposium

Seminole Jr. College - April 4, 5, 1975

Minutes were submitted by Dr. Kathleen H. Thomas which included the following information:

Five major problems were identified: I. Low enrollment, II. Attrition, III. Low achievers, IV. Articulation with the universities, and V. Lack of interest.

From the "Think Tank" various solutions to these problems were suggested.

Problem I (Low enrollment) was broken down to the:
A. Need to attract students.
B. Need for cooperative counselors.
C. Need for foreign language requirement.
D. Need for relevance in the classroom.
E. Need to counteract a previous bad experience.
F. Need for language as communication.
G. Need for support from administration.

The solutions were:
A. Advertise yourself and offerings.
B. Make friends of your counselors.
C. Seek alternatives to a simple foreign language requirement.
D. Make your classroom experience relevant by updating materials.
E. Recapture interest.
F. Use the foreign language for communication.
G. Explain your position.

Suggested solutions to Problem II (Attrition) were:
A. To use more oral work.
B. To individualize.
C. To change to fit the times, community and school.
D. To add special courses for nurses, police and social workers.

Problem III (Low achievers) was countered by these suggestions:
A. Individualize the pace.
B. Individualize the method.
C. Re-examine goals and objectives.

Problem IV (Articulation with universities) does not really exist. The university does its own thing and many community college students do not continue in the university anyway.

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Problem V (Stimulation of interest) brought forth these suggestions:

A. Participate in or organize a Language Day or Fair.
B. Consider a day on your campus devoted to the target language.
C. Look for scholarships.
D. Send students to local schools as tutors.
E. Investigate the co-op program. Perhaps they need a foreign language skill.

MINUTES OF THE PLENARY FOREIGN LANGUAGE
"THINK TANK" SYMPOSIUM

SEMINOLE JUNIOR COLLEGE
APRIL 4, 5, 1975

SUBMITTED BY: Dr. K. H. Thomas, Chairman,
Region III, Faculty Commission,
FACC.

Registration from 4:30 p.m. led into a get-acquainted hour followed by a delicious dinner with entertainment at an unusually low price at the Cavalier Motel, Sanford, Florida. Those attending were:

Ann O. Bachmann (Spanish/Russian)
Seminole Junior College
Sanford, FL 32771

Miguel Olivella (Spanish)
Brevard Community College
Clearlake Road
Cocoa, FL 32922

Mario Patrizi (Spanish)
Edison Community College
Fort Myers, FL 33902

Bill Dovhey (Russian)
Florida Technological University
Orlando, FL 32816

Jan Allen (French)
Seminole Jr. College
Sanford, FL 32771

Dr. Clemens Hallman
University of Florida
Foreign Language Education
Gainesville, FL 32601

Kary Olivella (Spanish)
Astronaut High School
Titusville, FL 32780

Kathleen H. Thomas (Spanish/French)
Brevard Community College
3865 No. Wickham Road
Melbourne, FL 32935

Orlando Moreno (Spanish/German)
Central Florida Community College
P.O. Box 1388
Ocala, FL 32670

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Phil Fredrickson (Academic Dean)
St. Petersburg Junior College
P.O. Box 13489
St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Rosita Martinez (Spanish)
Valencia Community College
P.O. Box 3028
Orlando, FL 32802

Nancy Sue Hoover (French)
Valencia Community College
P.O. Box 3028
Orlando, FL 32802

The first "THINK TANK" session lasted from 7:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. and the fact that everyone stayed around the conference table for that length of time astounds me now. At the time it seemed like a very short session!

I'll try to summarize our findings:

PROBLEM

I. Low enrollment.
   A. Need to attract students.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. Be your OWN PR man. Be assertive ... Don't wait for someone else to do it.
   A. Advertise.
      1. On radio.
      2. On TV.
      3. By signs.
      4. Use flyers.
      5. Buy bumper stickers, pins, stamps.
      6. Write articles for the school newspaper.
      7. Get the word out that a foreign language skill means a PLUS on the job market.
      8. Encourage fee waivers and invite teachers and others to use these waivers to join your classes.
      9. Encourage regency of credit to be gained through a foreign language course.
      10. Offer more Beginning Conversation Courses at the 100 level.
      11. Try for a class size limited to 20.
      12. Try divisional averages to balance low numbers in some classes.
      13. Be enthusiastic and show your interest.
      14. Keep up with latest methodology.
      15. Attend high school in-service days.
      16. Visit area high schools.

PROBLEM

I. B. Lack of cooperation from counselor.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. B. Talk to counselors (and administrators).
1. Invite them to your classes and activities.
2. Keep them informed about job opportunities using foreign languages.
3. Contact your career specialist.
4. Encourage your students to go back to the counselor to tell him about your classes.
5. Thank your counselors for the good job they are doing.

PROBLEM

I. C. No foreign language requirement.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. C. Do we need a foreign language requirement?
1. Seminole has a Plan B that accepts Foreign Language 200-level credits as alternatives for partial fulfillment of the Humanities requirements. Can we examine other alternatives in requirements?
2. Could a student take all language courses as a substitute for the required Humanities courses? We could if Foreign Language courses met the objectives expressed of Humanities.
3. How will CLEP in foreign languages affect us?
4. Foreign language credits may be used for Speech requirements under certain conditions.

PROBLEM

I. D. Lack of relevance in classroom.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. D. Put relevance in your foreign language classroom.
1. Stimulate interest in foods, music, politics, travel.
2. Use media students are used to -- comics and TV.
3. Use an audio-lingual method, conversation-based approach.

PROBLEM

I. E. Bad experience in high school.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. E. Counteract by inviting students to see what you do, by club activities.
1. Talk to them.
2. Recapture their interest.
3. Upgrade high school teachers' reputations.
4. Never downgrade the high school work.

PROBLEM

I. F. Students want "instant" language.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. F. Use grammar as a tool, not the product.
1. Let the emphasis be communication.

PROBLEM

I. G. No backing from Administration.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

I. G. Contact by a personal delegate or write a position paper to explain the place of foreign language in the curriculum of the community college to the Council of Academic Deans.

PROBLEM

II. Attrition.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

II. Don't turn the students off.
A. Use more oral work.
B. Individualize.
C. Change to fit the times, your community and your school.
D. Add beginning courses such as for nurses, police or social workers.

PROBLEM

III. What about the low achiever?

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

III. A. Individualize the pace.
B. Individualize the method.
C. Re-examine your goals and objectives. Maybe he can meet them. He does not have to transfer to a university course.

PROBLEM

IV. Articulation with the university.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

IV. A. It does not bother the university, so stop fighting this battle. How many of your students actually transfer from lower level courses?

PROBLEM

V. How to stimulate interest?

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

V. Be interested.
   A. Participate in or organize a Language Day or Fair. Join with university activities.
   B. Consider a day and place on your campus, using only the target language.
   C. Look for scholarships - encourage awards.
   D. Send out students to local schools as FLES teachers or tutors.
   E. Investigate your Co-op program. Perhaps they need a foreign language skill.

Saturday's scheduled "THINK TANK" continued to produce the above. In addition the books and materials exchange produced animated discussion and demonstrations of cassette tapes, TV tapes, film strips, a 16 mm. movie, overhead transparencies and slide program suggestions. This, plus an earlier discussion of methods, was most productive and stimulating. Mrs. Hoover showed transparencies she uses to teach German.

Hers was an innovative idea developed by herself based on a "see and say" paperback. This was extremely interesting. Dr. Thomas showed a video-tape by Dr. Lincoln Canfield, showing the use of gestures in Spanish. Mr. Olivella showed his student-acted video dialogues that he had coordinated with the DaSilva Beginning Spanish textbook and slides of a Foto-novela that he uses for more advanced classes. Dr. Bachmann's movie in Spanish entitled, "Traveler's Special" was well worth the review and will surely be on some of our next purchase orders.

Dr. Hallman outlined the tremendous possibilities awaiting students at the University of Florida, where they may enter the Center for Latin American Studies and gain a certificate along with their degree in Arts, Science, Business, Agriculture, etc., thereby greatly enhancing their chances on the job market. Community colleges are encouraged to think about Survey Courses on Latin America to lead into the Center's activities. Dr. Hallman also told about the University of Los Andes program in Bogota, Colombia - a program of living experience administered by the Center. He also spoke about the intriguing activities of the Center and their Conferences on Population Growth, etc. The Latin American Studies program is ranked as one of the top in the United States and the community colleges ought to be developing more feed-in survey courses. It was suggested that the University of Florida might help in promoting these courses at the community college level.

Dr. Hallman also reported to us about the Florida Foreign Language Task Force, of which he is a member, and their meeting with Commissioner Ralph Turlington to discuss the foreign language situation in Florida.

Various trips are being organized by the community colleges. Perhaps we could coordinate these and help each other!!

Valencia Community College
Trip to Valencia, Spain. SH-170-270 - 6 - 12 credits.
June 27 - August 13 - Cost approx. $1,366.00
Contact: Rosita Martinez
Valencia Community College
P.O. Box 3028
Orlando, FL 32802.

Central Florida Community College
Trip to Spain - July 4 - 28
Cost approx. $1,100.00 plus transportation to N.Y.C. - 6 credits.
Contact: Orlando Moreno
Central Florida Community College
P.O. Box 1388
Ocala, FL 32670.

Brevard Community College
Trip to Mexico. SPA 262, 263 - 6 credits.
June 23 - July 13. - Cost approx. $752.00
Contact: Dr. Kathleen Thomas
Brevard Community College
3865 No. Wickham Road
Melbourne, FL 32935.

Florida Technological University
Russian Area Studies Tour - 3 credits.
Contact: Dr. John Evans
Florida Technological University
Box 25000
Orlando, FL 32816.

Summer Study Program in Urbino, Italy
14 quarter hours credit
Contact: Dr. Anthony Cervone
Florida Technological University
Box 25000
Orlando, FL 32816.

Other addresses and information:

Mrs. Martinez referred us to an excellent article on jobs - MANPOWER 1985, Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Winter, 1974 - Published by U. S. Department of Labor.

Dr. Thomas let us preview the exciting Foreign Language radio spot announcements. These may be ordered from: Dr. Eugene Savaiano, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas 67208. Tape 1 is a radio spot announcement format (which we previewed). Tape 2 is basically the same without introductions or closings and intended for classroom use. Price $5.95 each or $8.95 for both.

The TV tape on gestures is Canfield Speaks series by Dr. Lincoln Canfield. Order from: Mr. Thomas Clayton, Manager, San Diego Area Instructional Television Authority, 5164 College Avenue, San Diego, California 92115. (We saw Program #6, "LaRubrica". There is also #7 in Spanish and #4 and #5 in English). (Ask for price and information).

The 16 mm. color film was Traveler's Special in Spanish. Order from: Universal Education and Visual Arts, 100 University City Plaza, Universal City, California 91608 -- $195.00.

A new event will take place on the Florida Technological University Campus, Orlando - a Language Day Fair. We need to encourage support and augment such "happenings"!! The Language Day at F.T.U. is under the direction of Dr. John DiPierro, Assistant Professor of French and Italian. It will be held on campus, April 25, from noon to 5:30 p.m. It will include display tables, music, exhibits, etc. and competition for area high schools and community colleges in the form of skits, dialogues, readings and the like. We should be thinking along these lines for the Bicentennial.

What are you doing about attrition? What about low achievers? What about absenteeism? Are you interested in discussing these things?

Please address all questions, comments, ideas to any of the participants or contact Dr. Thomas at Brevard Community College.

Our special thanks go to Dr. Ann [illegible]mann who so beautifully organized this Symposium, to Seminole Junior College as the host school, and to Dr. David Russo, Florida Keys Community College, who initiated the activity.